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ABSTRACT

Higher education's past, current, and future responses to occupational training and employment programs and services are considered as part of the Council on Education's Higher Education/Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program, which was supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. In addition, demographic factors and employment characteristics are examined since they provide a background for understanding college and university involvement with training and employment programs and services. Several case studies are included that illustrate successful occupational training and employment programs and services. Occupational education has been an established program in public education since before World War II, and during the 1960s and 1970s it grew steadily as college enrollments were increasing. A variety of occupational education programs and services that were more specialized than those available to traditional students in colleges and universities were developed to help those who were experiencing difficulty in entering the labor market. The case studies illustrate how two- and four-year colleges have responded in providing: classroom training in both academic and job-specific content skills in both blue-collar and white-collar occupations; employment services; employment and related research; program and policy evaluations; and continuing education for personnel specialists. Attention is focused on postsecondary programs and services funded under the CETA program. Recommendations for change are proposed in areas such as funding patterns, the structure and role of higher education, and the delivery of programs and services. (SW)

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AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

A Monograph of the Higher Education/CETA Project

Joel D. Lapin, Director, Higher Education/CETA Project — July 1982

# HIGHER EDUCATION'S CURRENT INVOLVEMENT WITH AND FUTURE RESPONSES TO OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

By Angelo C. Gilli, Sr.

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## INTRODUCTION

This monograph considers higher education's past, current, and future response to occupational training and employment programs and services. Demographic factors and employment characteristics are examined as they provide a background for understanding college and university involvement with training and employment programs and services. Several case studies are included which illustrate successful occupational training and employment programs and services. Recommendations for change are proposed in areas such as funding patterns, the structure and role of higher education, and the delivery of programs and services.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

Occupational education has been an established program in public education since before World War II. It was viewed as a form of instruction that provided educational relevance for interested students and, when combined with basic skills education, led to employment in fields requiring less than the baccalaureate degree.

The growth of occupational education in higher education was steady during the period of the 1960's and 1970's when college enrollments were increasing. With the increased availability of education, public interest moved in the direction of providing access to occupational programs and services to those whose educational needs were not met by conventional offerings. In response, federal legislation was passed that reflected public policy concerns related to occupational education. These included the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, the Vocational Education Act of 1963, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. In these acts, special target populations were identified for assistance. Later, various modifications provided for the inclusion of additional target groups. A major concern was the promotion of equal opportunity to less favored segments of society through methods aimed at improving their chances of gaining permanent employment. Since that time, provision of special employment training programs and services for difficult-to-employ individuals has become more accepted as an important public policy. Therefore a variety of occupational education programs and services that were more specialized and specific than those available to traditional students in colleges and universities were developed to help those who were experiencing difficulty in entering the labor market. The case studies in this monograph illustrate how two-year and four-year colleges have responded.

The special training provisions authorized in the Manpower Development and Training Act and its successors, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973 and the 1978 amendments, stem from the belief that special varieties of occupational training and employment programs and services are required for

persons identified as difficult to employ. It appears that attempts to reduce the level of unemployment will continue to be a high priority policy concern. Therefore occupational training and employment programs and services will continue to receive attention from federal, state, local, and private funding sources.

The most visible and contemporary piece of legislation in the occupational training and employment field is the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. This monograph concentrates on postsecondary institutional programs and services funded under this legislation, recognizing that these government funded programs and services are current extensions of the occupational education efforts of recent decades.

## OVERVIEW

The following overview of current population demographics and occupational and employment trends is provided as a background for examining the involvement of higher education with occupational training, employment programs, and related services.

Due to the decline in both the birth rate and the death rate, the average age of the population, which is presently just under 30, is expected to continue to rise until at least the year 2000. These statistics imply that adult learners have and will continue to have significant influence upon the orientation of higher education. This mature group of students will seek an educational system that includes programs and services with a direct relationship to their personal and employment concerns. An approach to education of this nature will include traditional as well as non-traditional offerings, in order to meet the needs of a diverse clientele.

Several states will be affected by lack of growth or reduction in their population, particularly in the northeastern and midwestern sections of the United States. The numbers and composition of college and university enrollments in these states may well reflect this stagnation or reduction. On the other hand, a number of southern and western states are likely to undergo substantial population increases, and can anticipate enrollment increases from both younger and older students.

State-wide and regional employment characteristics will continue to influence the nature of programs and services offered by colleges and universities as they respond to pressures from potential clients. States with the highest rates of joblessness will become more heavily engaged in efforts aimed at providing postsecondary employment preparation for adults. A trend may develop in which economic development will be linked with higher education efforts. Should this occur, higher education institutions in many states will become more deeply involved with aspects of preparing adults for employment in connection with regional and state-wide economic development concerns and plans. If funding inducements, public or private, are offered, the prospects for greater college and university involvement would be improved.

It is likely that special programs and services designed to enhance equity in employment within racial, age, and sex categories will be continued. Traditionally, those with the highest levels of unemployment include young adults between the ages of 16 and 24, especially those under the age of 20, and members of minority groups. Employment rates for women, while continuing to climb each year, still do not match those for men at any age level. In 1978, 50 percent of adult women were working or seeking employment; 62 percent of women between 25 and 34 were in the labor force.[1] In addition, a decline in employment participation rates is found for male workers over 45 years of age, and more obviously so after 55. The work participation rate for males was 95 percent for the 25-44 age group and 90 percent for the 45-54 category, but declined to 73 percent for those in the 55-64 year old group.[2] Funding for programs and services to address the needs of such groups is likely to continue in response to the pursuit and provision of equal opportunity.

Occupational growth through the mid-eighties will be in the white-collar knowledge and information sectors. Growth is expected in the following areas: professional and technical workers, managers and administrators, clerical workers, and sales workers.[3]

## OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Most American adults need to and wish to work in order to fully participate in society. Higher education institutions have responded by providing occupational training, employment programs, and an array of services related to these endeavors.

There are at least three major functions colleges and universities provide in occupational training and education. The first and most obvious is classroom-based education. Many two-year and four-year institutions provide classroom instruction in various occupations at the postsecondary level. Many of these programs lead to a degree, while others result in a certificate. Their major objective is to provide job-entry level training with general education elements in some of the programs. Enrollments in occupational training programs in colleges and universities have steadily increased over the years from 600,000 in 1968 to 2.1 million in 1978.[4] Occupational programs within the rubric of adult education have also increased in enrollments, from 3.0 to 4.5 million people during the same period. Currently, about half of the full-time students in two-year colleges are enrolled in such programs.[5] Furthermore, occupational education for students with special needs rose from slightly over 100,000 in 1968 to 2.15 million in 1978.[6]

A second function is the provision of support services. Two-year and four-year colleges and universities can and do provide an array of services, which may not technically enroll students, aimed at enhancing training and employment. Assessment, counseling, job development, and placement are integral components of occupational training and often accompany classroom training programs. These services deal directly with identification,

development, and evaluation of skills that would enable individuals to secure and maintain their jobs. Although some form of recognition may be given, academic credit is rarely awarded for successful completion of or participation in these activities.

A third function of higher education involvement is that of research. Research and evaluation are the traditionally recognized services concentrated in four-year institutions. Most of these institutions employ professionals who have acquired the expertise needed to conduct research dealing with the stages involved in establishing, conducting, and evaluating employment-oriented instruction and policies. Technical assistance is also provided by the faculty and staff of many four-year institutions.

As part of this function many higher education institutions have demonstrated the capacity to organize and conduct training programs for occupational educators, support service personnel, and highly specialized trainers for the private sector. Manpower and related practitioners can receive instruction aimed at improvement of their skills as well.

Provision of employment programs offered by colleges and universities has grown substantially, especially since 1973 when incentives were offered by virtue of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. In recent years, CETA training and employment programs and services, under their several titles, have reached well over 700,000 persons (excluding individuals actually employed through the Public Service Employment Section, which was discontinued in 1981).[7] Since its beginning, institutions of higher education have worked with CETA under Titles II, III, IV, VI, and VII.

Related federal legislation, through which colleges and universities could become service providers, includes the Older Americans Act and the Work Incentive Program. Enrollments in programs financed through these acts have increased sharply over the past few years, giving evidence of their popularity.[8]

Adult education is considered to be a major provider of occupational training and employment programs in higher education. Colleges and universities have long provided adult education pursuant to occupational training and employment-related objectives. The popularity of such offerings continue to increase. In 1975, more than 17 million people were enrolled in adult education programs. Of this total, about 37 percent utilized an institution of higher education, with 18 percent in two-year schools and 19 percent in four-year colleges and universities. About half of these adults took courses that could be categorized as occupational training and employment programs.[9]

Thus the range of occupational training and employment functions that colleges and universities provide extends over three broad categories:

1. Classroom training programs which offer instruction in academics and job-specific content skills in both blue-collar and white-collar occupations;
2. Occupational training and employment services;
3. Manpower and related research, program and policy evaluations, and continuing education for manpower practitioners.

## CLASSROOM TRAINING

St. Edward's University
Austin, Texas 78704

St. Edward's University established a State Migrant Program, funded by state and local prime sponsors, to create greater educational and career opportunities for migrant and seasonal farm workers and their families. The major academic thrust of the summer program is that of upgrading the academic skills of students in language arts and mathematics so that they will be better prepared to continue their formal education and ultimately be successful in a career of their choice. During the summer session students work seventeen hours per week and attend classes fifteen hours weekly.

Cerritos Community College
11110 East Alondra Boulevard
Norwalk, California 90650

Cerritos Community College administers a California Worksite Education and Training Project (CWETA) to train structurally unemployed persons in entry level drafting and design positions for Bechtel Power Corporation. In this 14-week program classroom instruction is offered at the college and successful graduates are guaranteed placement with Norwalk's largest employer.

College of Lake County
Grayslake, Illinois 60030

Occupational training classes are offered to CETA students in five general curricula: Business and Office, Health Service, Applied Biological-Agricultural, Public Service, and Technical and Industrial. The College of Lake County also provides pre-vocational training, remedial education, GED preparation, Adult Basic Education, and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

Spring Garden College and
the Institute for Learning
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19118

The Institute for Learning and Spring Garden Vocational Technical College designed a technical training program which would meet the needs of GED youth and develop an upward mobility program for CETA by linking CETA participants to postsecondary education opportunities.

The Technical Training Program fulfills these needs by enrolling 40 CETA-eligible youth in Spring Garden College's Division of Continuing Education while also providing a stipend and tuition. Besides enrollment in a one-year certificate program, supportive services are integrated into the trainees' schedule. These support services are in reading, mathematics, career development, counseling, vocational assistance, and job development. To satisfy a prime sponsor requirement, the

trainees are also enrolled in a worksite experience related to their technical area. Hence, a trainee is enrolled in a one-year certificate program which includes: (1) Academic courses; (2) Vocational shop; (3) A worksite experience; and (4) Six areas of support services. The Philadelphia CETA Prime Sponsor provides each trainee with a stipend, tuition, and supplies.

Broward Community College
225 East Las Olas Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301

In recent years this college, with funds from the Broward Employment and Training Administration, has conducted a number of classroom training programs. Instruction has been offered in bank departmental and teller training, which trained participants for entry level positions in banking and other financial institutions; clerical skills, which trained individuals in necessary office skills to obtain entry level positions; and an electronics technician training program which provided in-house electronics upgrading.

## OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, Illinois 61920

Eastern Illinois University, located in a rural sector of the state, provides a number of CETA funded programs and services for two target groups at the same time. One service, funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, provides youth employment services to senior citizens. Under the direction of senior citizens, disadvantaged and dropout prone youth provide household services to less physically able senior citizens. This helps the elderly to remain in their own residences rather than move into nursing homes. It also provides youth with appropriate work attitudes and behaviors in addition to acquisition of job skills.

Oscar Rose Junior College
Midwest City, Oklahoma 73110

The purpose of the Basic Skills and Career Program is to provide meaningful educational services to 30 unemployed youths, primarily American Indians, on the campus of Oscar Rose Junior College, a public two-year institution in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. One of the prime objectives of the Basic Skills and Careers Program is to search out disillusioned youths, especially American Indians, provide career and personal counseling, and bring them into a traditional educational system which offers success-oriented curricula. Oscar Rose Junior College has prior experience with other CETA supported programs, such as the water utilities training program for the Cherokee Nation which has been quite successful in retention and placement of participants in study-related jobs.

The educational activities of the Basic Skills and Careers Program consist of course work, internships, and supervised studies in three academic areas: Environmental Science (Water/Wastewater Technology), Engineering Technology, and General Science. Presently, 19 youths under 22 years of age are enrolled in general education, water-wastewater technology, and science courses. The majority of the students are female. About 40 percent of the students are American Indians.

Through the program, at least 30 unemployed youths under 22 years of age will succeed in course work toward an Associate Degree in either Environmental Science (Water/Wastewater Technology), in Engineering Technology, or in Natural Science. It is also envisioned that the Oklahoma County CETA office and the Bureau of Indian Affairs will continue their support for the program and for the participating students.

Northern Virginia Community College
8333 Little River Turnpike
Annandale, Virginia 22003

Career Life Planning for Ex-Offenders is administered by the Extended Learning Institute of Northern Virginia Community College through a grant from the Northern Virginia Manpower Consortium. The program focuses on career development skills necessary to achieve upwardly mobile, career oriented jobs through further training or education. Participants receive 15 hours of workshops per week in topics such as decision-making, self-assessment, work values, resume writing, interviewing, money management, and many other life skill areas. This is supplemented by 10 hours of field exercises per week, which include informational interviewing, job searches, placement offices, major business offices, and other career exploration arenas. The program also provides personal and career counseling staff in support of students' pursuits. In total, the student makes a voluntary commitment to attend class 25 hours per week for three to four months to complete the program, and to move to further training, direct placement, or college studies.

## MANPOWER AND RELATED RESEARCH, PROGRAM AND POLICY EVALUATIONS, AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR MANPOWER PRACTITIONERS

University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri 65211

Funded by the Governor's State Employment and Training Council, the University of Missouri at Columbia has developed a Staff Development Project which serves prime sponsors and other CETA-related staff in the state. The staff at the university asks prime sponsors what their specific training needs are and responds quickly with the services of its own personnel or services of quality consultants to provide the needed assistance. There have been staff-offered workshops on time management, affirmative action, grievance and complaints, welfare programs and policies, independent monitoring units, labor relations, interpersonal communications and team-building, the history of employment training, management and supervision, counseling skills, and displaced homemaker programs.

University of Texas
Center for the Study of Human Resources
Austin, Texas 78712

The Center for the Study of Human Resources at the University of Texas at Austin specializes in labor market issues and concerns. It has conducted a wide variety of research on and for administrative staff of CETA programs at the local level. The Center has just completed a study of the Austin labor market for the local CETA prime sponsor as part of its Title VII activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

Higher education's future response to occupational training and employment programs and services will be affected by changes in a number of areas. Among the more important are funding patterns, the structure and role of higher education, and delivery of programs and services.

### Funding Patterns

Little growth in future funding is anticipated during the next decade in most states. Higher education institutions may respond by searching for new ways to at least retain their present levels of funding. Many will find innovative approaches to enhancing and retaining their existing funding levels, such as increased utilization of user fees, especially for non-traditional and continuing programs,[10] and securing foundation support. A likely source of monies will be federal and state allocations for employment-related education, training, and services. Progressive institutions may also seek to increase revenue through contracts with the private sector.

The current CETA legislation expires in 1982 and it is likely that the new CETA re-authorization bill will emphasize a number of areas: (1) Strengthening the involvement of the private sector, through the local private industry council, in the planning and administering of training programs; (2) Increasing the responsibility and role of state governments and governors and decreasing the role of the federal government; (3) De-emphasizing income-maintenance funds for participants; and (4) An emphasis on measured results and performance standards with less concern for procedures. It appears that three billion dollars for fiscal year 1983 may be approved. Since this is likely to be overwhelmingly targeted for provision of employment and training programs and services, higher education institutions may prosper as providers of training.

Those colleges and universities which have a representative on local and state private industry councils may be in a better position to benefit from these changes. Also, those institutions presently committed to providing occupational training and employment programs and services already have an advantage and may strive to maintain and increase such involvement. Colleges and universities not previously engaged may seek to move into those areas in the interest of maintaining present levels of service and funding.[11]

Several patterns are likely to develop in accordance with each state's priorities. One fact does appear certain: future funding austerity and student needs will encourage higher education to devote larger shares of its efforts to providing occupational training and employment programs and services.

### The Structure and Role of Higher Education

An important development within the rubric of state public education master planning will be an expansion of the roles of colleges and universities to serve a broader range of clients. More higher education institutions, in seeking to serve as community education organizations, will strive to provide instruction and services to virtually all citizens regardless of age, interest, abilities, and intellectual achievements. Their institutional roles will more directly embrace the notion of seeking to help people to improve their lives through lifelong learning and employment.

Enrollments may be maintained through serving non-traditional students who will become more attractive to a larger number and variety of higher education institutions. Funding opportunities for the training and upgrading of adults are likely to result in program and service proposals from colleges and universities to meet these needs.

The redistribution of occupational training and employment programs and services among a greater range of two-year colleges in the various states can have several effects. David Breneman, in a study of community college financing, cited several advantages and disadvantages that could result.[12] On the positive side:

1. A greater number of institutions will become involved in addressing problems associated with occupational training, employment programs, and services.
2. Constructive competition can foster development of innovative approaches to various aspects of this concern.
3. Potential clients will have a greater range of occupational training and employment programs and services from which to choose.

Major drawbacks may include:

1. Unnecessary duplication of offerings.
2. Dilution of resources and funding.

Willingness to respond to occupational training and employment programs and services may result in changes in many curricula. Some colleges may reduce their emphasis upon university parallel studies and place greater stress upon short term and terminal occupational training and employment programs and services. This trend will add to the concern for the nature and quality of general education in those schools, as well as the balance between general education and occupational education. In the years ahead, a larger portion of two-year college students will consist of full-time students who have poor academic preparation at the onset, and an

abundance of part-time students who are academically well prepared upon enrolling (including holders of college degrees).[13]

Many of these students, both full-time and part-time, will seek offerings that will prepare them for entry into new occupations and jobs. Curricula and services designed to best serve these varieties of students need to be put in place. The potential negative effects cited are likely to be minimized through careful master planning and the involvement of a greater number of colleges in decision-making.

Universities can continue to fulfill or consider expanding their unique roles. Chief among these are: research and evaluation in areas of curriculum development and employment, occupational training of trainers, training and continuing-education services for professionals and support staff in the service-providing areas, and technical assistance.

**The Delivery of Programs and Services**

Several needs lie ahead in the development of occupational training and employment programs and services. One is to establish and strengthen rapid reacting units to deliver occupational training. Colleges and universities have a strong tradition of shared governance and decision-making which precludes fast action. All too often, when outside agencies need quick program planning and implementation, colleges are too slow, and their decision-making process too cumbersome, to respond quickly.

Special rapid reaction units that operate semi-autonomously from the traditional structure of higher education are needed. What is called for are structures and mechanisms that will enable higher education institutions to respond efficiently and effectively to demands from agencies such as CETA and state job services and sundry employers. Such a structure permits an operating mode that would allow for additional flexibility and accessibility—characteristics likely to be of increased importance in the years ahead. The time lag between identifying training needs and developing and implementing programs and services may be reduced by special reaction units which will need to perform the following:

1. Access sources of private and public sector employment concerns.
2. Coordinate meetings and conferences to delineate employment program and service needs.
3. Assist in recruitment of employment program participants.
4. Provide assessment and counseling.
5. Coordinate and assume leadership in curriculum development.
6. Assemble facilities, equipment, professional personnel, and support staff.
7. Assist in job development, placement, and follow-up.
8. Conduct and evaluate employment programs.

Evidence that such structures are already operational in some colleges and universities can be observed in several of the cited case studies. These approaches can be used and embellished upon by others.

Improvement in services for job changers, which address a large number of persons at any one time,[14] are needed. Provision of services dealing with each phase of the process, from early considerations of job changing to making refinements in recently acquired work stations, would be helpful to many. Such opportunities may become important as a result of increased competition for jobs because of the bunching of the prime-age workforce in the 25 to 44 age bracket. Career frustration and disappointment may increase the number of job changers seeking training and education in colleges and universities.

Also, substantial number of individuals have become involved with self-planned learning projects that are employment related. Such projects involve five steps:[15]

1. Identification of skills and knowledge;
2. Acquisition of relevant information (such as availability of work, salary, on-the-job lifestyle, and demands of the new position);
3. Location and assembly of material to be mastered.
4. Mastery of identified skills and knowledge; and
5. Evaluation.

The availability of counselors and resource persons for each stage of the self-planned learning endeavors would enhance the participants' chances of successful completion.

**SUMMARY**

Opportunities exist for colleges and universities to provide occupational training and employment programs and services that depart from the traditional approaches. Pressures to respond in this manner are brought to bear by the changing characteristics and needs of the college population, financial realities, the private sector, and the labor market. A relatively stable characteristic, on the other hand, is the concern for equitable access to employment. This concern has and will continue to be translated by public and private agencies into funding allocations for assisting difficult-to-employ persons to gain entry to the world of work. A broad role for colleges and universities is to revise or strengthen innovative and effective approaches to serve individuals previously not addressed by these institutions.

The desire to remain viable and valuable to society at large, and to their immediate communities in particular, serves as a motivator for higher education institutions to participate more deeply in occupational training, employment programs, and related services.

A major recommendation is that colleges and universities establish rapid reaction units that can respond to employment training needs in shorter periods of time

than would normally occur. Further, much of what needs to be done within the field of occupational training and employment falls outside the traditional credit-granting delivery system and needs to be dealt with in terms of human "capital" development and employment related objectives.

**Footnotes**

[1] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the U.S. (100th Edition)* (Washington: Government Printing Office), Table 13, p. 16.

[2] *Ibid.*, Table 645, p. 392.

[3] U.S. Department of Labor, *Employment and Training Report of the President, 1980* (Washington: Government Printing Office), p. 6.

[4] W. Vance Grant and Leo J. Eiden, *Digest of Education Statistics, 1980* (Washington National Center for Education Statistics, 1980), Table 168, p. 168.

[5] Angelo C. Gilli, Sr., "Public Two Year College Funding and Program Patterns," (To be published in *Community/ Junior College Research Quarterly).*

[6] Grant, *Education Statistics*, p. 168.

[7] *Ibid.*, Table 289, p. 172.

[8] *Idem.*

[9] Ruth L. Boaz, *Participation in Adult Education: Final Report 1975* (Washington: National Center for Education Statistics, 1978), Table G, p. 9.

[10] Pat Callan, "Director's Report," (Sacramento: California Postsecondary Education Commission, 1980), p. 10.

[11] Robert L. Jacobsen, "Battle Looms as 4-Year Institutions Look to Vocational Education," *The Chronicle for Higher Education*, Nov. 18, 1981, p. 6.

[12] "Community Colleges Face Tough Competition for Funds, First-Time Students, Report Says," *The Chronicle for Higher Education*, Nov. 18, 1981, p. 1.

[13] *Missions and Functions of the California Community Colleges, Commission Report 81-14* (Sacramento: California Postsecondary Education Commission, 1981), p. 16.

[14] Angelo C. Gilli, Sr., *Education for Work* (Yonkers: Collegium Book Publishers, Inc., 1980), pp. 145-157.

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*The views expressed in this monograph are those of the author, not necessarily those of the American Council on Education.*